

**Draft Summary of the Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group Meeting  
Oroville Facilities Relicensing (FERC Project No. 2100)  
June 12, 2001**

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) hosted a meeting for the Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group on June 12, 2001 in Oroville.

A summary of the discussion, decisions made, and action items is provided below. This summary is not intended to be a transcript, analysis of the meeting, or to indicate agreement or disagreement with any of the items summarized, except where expressly stated. The intent is to present a summary of the discussion for information purposes for interested parties who could not attend the meeting.

**Introduction**

Attendees were welcomed to the Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group meeting and objectives were discussed. The meeting agenda and list of meeting attendees with their affiliations are appended to this summary as Attachments 1 and 2, respectively. Meeting flip chart notes are included as Attachment 3.

The Facilitator provided the Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group with a calendar containing the dates, times and locations (when known) of all Work Group and Plenary Group meetings through February 2002. The calendar is appended to this summary as Attachment 4.

**Action Items – May 15, 2001 Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group Meeting**

A summary of the May 15, 2001 Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group is posted on the relicensing web site. The Facilitator reviewed the status of action items from the May 15, 2001 meeting as follows:

**Action Item #LU6:** Provide definitions of Issue Sheet and other commonly used terms and examples to the Work Group.

Status: Steve Nachtman of the consulting team reported that the task of developing definitions for the Work Group had expanded to include terms from other Work Groups. One participant suggested that the Glossary of Terms from the IIP could be used as a base for these definitions. A definition list will be available to the Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group at their next meeting.

**Action Item #LU7:** Develop definition for 'project land' to accompany the Land Use, Land Management, and Aesthetics Work Group Issue Statements submitted to Plenary Group for inclusion in Scoping Document 1.

Status: Ward Tabor of DWR and the Task Force charged with developing the definition, offered the following Task Force recommendation:

"The term "project lands" means all lands (and other interests in lands) within the FERC Project boundaries including lands owned by DWR, lands managed by DPR as part of the Lake Oroville State Recreation Area, lands managed by DFG as part of the Oroville Wildlife Area, and lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, as well as lands which may potentially be incorporated into or deleted from the revised FERC Project boundaries as part of the relicensing process."

Craig Jones of the State Water Contractors emphasized that the focus of their efforts should be on project impacts irrespective of whether the land is within the project boundary or not. Craig also pointed out the recommended definition was in agreement with Mayor Andoe's request that the addition or removal of land from the project be considered.

**Action Item #LU8:** Investigate development of a project map that shows land ownership and land use designations for project and nearby lands.

Status: Jim Martin reported that DWR was in the process of developing a GIS database and preliminary maps for the project area. He indicated that the maps should be ready in a few months. He added that much of the information DWR is using to develop the GIS database is coming from Butte County and can thus be accessed locally. Jim added that anyone wishing to get GIS information related to the relicensing effort should make a formal request to DWR.

**Action Item #LU9:** Provide the Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group with the Process Graphic.

Status: The Facilitator reported that the graphic is still in draft form but should be finalized shortly and available at that time.

**Action Item #LU10:** Make inquiry of the Department of Forestry and the U.S. Forest Service regarding a presentation on fuel load issues at the next Work Group meeting.

Status: A presentation of fuel loading issues is part of this meeting.

**Action Item #LU11:** Confirm with Mayor Andoe the text for his issue regarding sale of some project lands.

Status: Mayor Andoe was contacted and is satisfied that the issue statements include his issue.

**Action Item #LU12:** Provide revised handouts of Draft Issue Sheets, reflecting changes made to the Issue Statements.

Status: The revised Issue Statements were sent out to the Work Group on May 16, 2001.

### **Fuel Loading Presentation**

Pete Maki of the Butte County Fire Safe Council provided the Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group with a presentation on fuel loading and its relationship to wild land fires, and how the issue might relate to the relicensing process. The presentation included a video describing fire and fire management in California and a one-page overview of the California Fire Plan. He emphasized that many of California's ecosystems, including those in the Oroville area, have developed with fire as a critical component over thousands of years. He stressed that there is a difference between fire that occurs naturally in the environment and the types of catastrophic fires that have become more common to California and the West. Pete explained that through decades of fire prevention, dangerous amounts of woody fuels and brush has been allowed to build-up on the forest floor. Before aggressive prevention measures fires were more frequent, less destructive, and helped keep the forest floor clear of woody build-up, brush and other fire fuels. He described accounts from early European settlers describing the forest as "park-like" with very little brush or wood accumulation in the forest under story. Without these "ladder fuels" historically fires remained on the forest floor rather than enveloping the forest canopy with disastrous consequences. He stressed that pre-fire management is critical to successfully reducing fuel loads and avoiding catastrophic wildfires. The overview of the California Fire Plan is appended to this summary as Attachment 5.

The California Fire Plan is the State's road map for reducing the risk of wildfire. The Plan emphasizes what needs to be done long before a fire starts to reduce fire fighting costs and property losses, increase firefighter safety, and contribute to ecosystem health. Developed through a cooperative effort between the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection and the

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF), the Fire Plan identifies critical steps for success as follows: involve the community, assess community risk, develop solutions and implement projects. Pete added that the Plan is currently in the environmental review process to determine the environmental impacts of the various fuel management strategies proposed.

The goal of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention (CDF) and other cooperating state, federal and local entities is to reintroduce fire to the ecosystem, reduce fire hazards, while avoiding the risk of initiating large wildfires. Methods to help reduce fire risk, while introducing fire back into the ecosystem include: mechanical fuel load removal, the use of herbicides to remove brush and weed species, and control fire management. Depending on the nature of the treated area, the implementation of fuel reduction programs sometimes requires environmental documentation.

Maki also distributed excerpts from Bulletin No. 117-6 Oroville Reservoir Water Resources Recreation Report. Page 32 of the report states that the responsibility of developing and executing fire reduction efforts rests with CDF. However, landowners and managers have an obligation to maintain their property in a fire safe status. In this case DPR and DWR are responsible for sound fire management on project lands. Several Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group participants expressed concern that fuel loads on state land that borders private land has been allowed to accumulate. For the relicensing effort DPR and DWR will need to coordinate fuel management efforts on project lands and adjacent lands with local and state management plans. Project lands supporting focused recreation uses represent a potentially high risk for fire danger, and require focused, coordinated fire management. Peter indicated that fuel load information developed by CDF for the region could be added to the relicensing GIS database. He added that a number of areas in the region (Kelly Ridge, the Field Division Office, North side of the Diversion Pool) are classified as 'high risk' areas. Excerpts from Bulletin No. 117-6 are appended to this summary as Attachment 6.

Peter summarized by suggesting the collaborative carefully coordinate with CDF throughout the relicensing effort since it is likely that much of the environmental, planning and mapping work finished by CDF can be utilized in the relicensing process.

- ♦ Ward Tabor of DWR asked if the environmental studies coming from the CDF/USFS effort would be compatible with the environmental documents coming from the relicensing process. Pete responded that the California Fire Plan has a Programmatic level CEQA document that local plans tier from. It is important for DWR and local fire management groups to work cooperatively so that information in existing environmental documents can be shared.
- ♦ The Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group discussed the status of free burn areas (areas where fire is allowed to burn or where control burns are permitted). Woody Elliot of DPR responded that the state has a control burn plan for the region.

### **Issue Sheet Development**

Draft revised Issue Sheets with Issue Statements, Issues Addressed, Resource Goals and suggested Geographic Scope were distributed to the Work Group and are provided with this meeting summary as Attachment 7.

The Work Group provided comments and revisions to the draft Issue Sheets for Land Use and Land Management. The Work Group discussed whether the issues identified in the sheet supported the Issue Statement as written, and the adequacy of identified Resource Goals and Geographic Scope. The Work Group discussed the role of Resource Goals in the study plan development process. The Facilitator suggested that Resource Goals represent what a participant wants to see for the resource. They can be conflicting from one participant to the next. Resource

goals help focus what should be included in the study plan. If structured appropriately, the studies can help resolve conflicts between resource goals. The Work Group agreed that having a comprehensive list of Resource Goals would help to fashion study plans.

- ♦ One participant asked if noise was a component of aesthetic planning. Steve Nachtman responded that he would research the issue and report back to the Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group at their next meeting.
- ♦ The Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group agreed to review the information in the Issue Sheets for Aesthetics 1, 2, 3 and 4, and be prepared to discuss any suggestions at their July 10, 2001 meeting. Participants were also encouraged to discuss the issue sheets with the groups they represent to make sure that we have captured the full range of Resource Goals in the Issue Sheets.
- ♦ The consulting team was tasked with developing Existing Information and Information Needs for each Issue Sheet.

### **Next Meeting**

The Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group agreed to meet on:

Date: Tuesday, July 10, 2001  
Time: 6 to 10 PM  
Location: To be determined

### **Agreements Made**

1. The Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group agreed to review the information in the Issue Sheets for Aesthetics 1, 2, 3 and 4 and prepare to discuss suggestions at their July 10, 2001 meeting. Participants were also encouraged to discuss the draft issue sheets with the groups they represent to make sure the full range of Resource Goals are represented in the Issue Sheets and bring any comments to the Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group for discussion.
2. The Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group agreed to meet again on July 10, 2001 from 6 PM to 10 PM (location to be determined).

### **Action Items**

The following list of action items identified by the Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group includes a description of the action, the participant responsible for the action, and item status.

**Action Item #LU13:** Determine if Noise is an Aesthetics issue and if not, where it will be covered.  
**Responsible:** Consulting Team  
**Due Date:** July 10, 2001

**Action Item #LU14:** Prepare draft Existing Information and Information Needs for each Issue Statement and distribute for review and comment to the Land Use, Land Management and Aesthetics Work Group.  
**Responsible:** Consulting Team  
**Due Date:** July 3, 2001